

Royal visits... the AGM... Channel 4... and much more inside...



Adam's appeal for Christmas



Millions see his picture

His name is Adam Howard, and his is the face which has launched the Society's massive Christmas appeal. Seven million pictures of him have gone out on appeal leaflets, and he is also featured on the back-up advertising. If Adam's appeal touches the hearts of the public as the Society hopes, then it is likely that the Christmas target of £1,717,000 will be achieved, and the money will be available to help more children like Adam, this year and every year.

Adam is a pupil at the Society's Rutland House School, Nottingham. Read more about him and his appeal on Page 12.

TWO Royal occasions for The Spastics Society. Princess Anne goes walkabout to meet pupils and visitors after opening the new Indoor Riding School at Meldreth Manor School, and the Duchess of Kent, the Society's Patron, arrives at the Society's annual general meeting to receive a warm welcome from hundreds of delegates. The Duchess is accompanied by Chairman Mrs Joyce Smith, and Princess Anne by Meldreth's headmaster, Mr Tony McEvoy.

Picture report on Princess Anne's visit on pages 6 and 7, and our extensive AGM coverage starts on page 2.

VAT: 'We will not give up'

THE campaign to exempt charities from VAT has received a major setback—but the battle for relief goes on.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Geoffrey Howe, has once again said "No" to pleas to remove the burden of the unrecoverable tax from charities.

That the Chancellor is adamant that no changes will be made became clear when he re-stated his position twice in October.

First of all, he told the annual conference of the National Council for Voluntary Organisation, and then repeated his refusal in a letter to Mr Tim Yeo, Chairman of the Charities VAT Reform Group.

The refusal comes as a blow to the Reform Group which has just launched a new initiative backed by over 100 charities.

But they are equally adamant that the campaign will be continued.

In his letter to Mr Yeo, who is Director of The Spastics Society, the Chancellor reiterated the arguments which the Treasury has previously given.

"We examined all the schemes of VAT relief

Continued on Page 9



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The night before the AGM... and delegates



● A welcome at the front door of HQ from Chairman, Mrs Joyce Smith, for Professors Martin Bobrow and Paul Polani of the Paediatric Research Unit at Guy's Hospital. Prof Bobrow will succeed Prof Polani, who is retiring at the end of this month.



● John Tough, general manager of Spastics Shops, with Mrs Brenda Ashcroft, whose husband Derek is a member of the Executive Council, and the Society's Hon Treasurer, Mr William Huddleston.



● Mr Simon Reynier, treasurer of the Salisbury Group; Miss Paula Smith, daughter of the Society's Chairman and Salisbury group secretary; Mrs Diana Yeo, whose husband, Tim, is the Society's Director; and Paula's father, Mr Peter Smith.



● A group from the North: Social work co-ordinator Kate McKenna, of Liverpool; regional social worker for the North West, Eve Holden; Mr C. Fallon of Widnes Spastics Fellowship; Mrs Lynne Fallon, and Lynne Smith, county organiser, Merseyside.



● Mrs Hilda Sharp, from the Cheltenham and district group; Mr Dick Sharp, chairman of the West Region; Joy and Charles Sterry, of the Gloucester and district group; Mrs Dawn Firkins and Mr Arthur Firkins, of the Cheltenham group. Mr Firkins is a member of the Society's Finance Committee.

Treasurer sets the target—we must raise £100m in five years

OVER the next five years The Spastics Society has to raise £100 million—just to stand still. That was the target set by the Hon Treasurer, Mr William Huddleston, when he presented his report to the AGM. But he was not daunted by the task—knowing the confidence of the Society, he said, he did not think it would be content to stand still.

Why? "There are so many spastic persons we do not yet serve, there are so many projects crying out to be implemented, there are so many exciting experiments in life enrichment we have never even tried. We must never stand still."

Confident

So confident, indeed, was Mr Huddleston that he actually encouraged people to ask for money! He said:

"As I have gone around the Society this year I have heard people say they cannot ask for this or that because the Society is short of money. Don't you make that decision. Don't you stifle that idea or initiative, or project.

Embarrass the Executive Council with your demands. The Society would never have lasted 30 years if it had been made up of doleful people. Good projects will attract their own money as long as we have the dedicated staff and committed volunteers who have to get together brought us back to break even in so short a time."

Deficit

It was that break even point that provided encouragement in Mr Huddleston's report. It would have been reached, he said, if the Society had not been burdened with unrecoverable VAT—which turned what could have been a net surplus of £160,000 into a net deficiency of the same amount.

On the Society's spending during the financial year reviewed, Mr Huddleston said that care of spastic people amounted to £17m; some £6.4m was spent on residential care; £5.8m on education and training; about £2.4m on employment; about £0.7m on welfare; about £0.4m on research and development, and about £1.4m

was provided for the support and development of groups who, in turn, provide similar services in their localities.

Cold financial facts, however, he said, did not tell the whole story of the value of services. "How can one put a value on a life reclaimed from a long-stay hospital? How can one put a value on the relief for parents which could prevent a strained family from breaking up? How can one put a value on independent living?"

Mr Huddleston reported more good news: income from appeals, donations, legacies and other sources had increased by 13 per cent, and fees and grants for services increased by £1.7m.

The report and accounts were adopted.



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gather for the Society's reception at HQ



● Mr Douglas Shapland, a member of the Executive Council, Mr B. Harding, who is a County Councillor and chairman of the Cornish Spastics Society, and Mrs Kay Harding, secretary of the Caradon branch.



● Enjoying a pre-AGM get together were delegates Bing and Barbara Jones, who represented the Rhuddlan group in North Wales.



● Mrs Doris Snowden, from the Greater Manchester group talks to Executive Council members, Dr Millicent Regan, and Mrs C. E. Williams.



● David Bourne, appeals officer for the North West, with Mr Neil Hammil, of the Barrow in Furness group, and Mrs Harold Sharpe, a member of the group's executive committee.



● Comparing notes about their respective areas are Mr E. Plummer, Chairman of the Spalding and District group, and Mr Frank Wright, of the Derby and district group.



● Committee secretary Anne Williams, with Anita Maunsell, the Society Head of Information, and Diana Patterson, secretary of the Medical Education Information Unit.

Duke is first President of Society

FOR the first time in its history, The Spastics Society has a President.

He is the Duke of Westminster.

The Duke, aged 31, is married, has one daughter and lives at Eaton Hall, in Cheshire, where he has already established a close connection with the local Spastics Society.

Earlier this year the Duke opened the new extension to Daresbury Hall, the Society's centre for multiply handi-

capped people, near Warrington, after his own donation of £10,000 launched a £250,000 fund raising campaign.

The Duke was educated at Harrow and served in the Queen's Own Yeomanry.

Estates

As the Sixth Duke of Westminster he is landlord to some of the most

famous and exclusive areas of central London, including parts of Belgrave and Westminster.

Announcing the news to the Society's AGM, Mrs Joyce Smith, Chairman of The Society, said: "We have never had a President and I thought it was time we did. I am pleased to say that a very nice young man has agreed to become our first President."

Chairman's confident speech Now to an even greater success

Confidence, enthusiasm, and the hope of even greater achievements in the future. Those were the encouraging keynotes in the speech by Mrs Joyce Smith, the Chairman of The Spastics Society, when she spoke at the annual general meeting which marked 30 years of the Society's work.

And there was no doubt that hundreds of delegates from all over the country who packed the meeting at the Royal College of Surgeons in London, shared her enthusiasm. There was so much good news at the AGM, and especially on finance, after years of crippling deficits.

At the AGM last year said Mrs Smith, the Society was at a crossroads.

"Financially we were just beginning to turn the corner, and despite a shortfall below expenditure, we had every reason to believe that we could continue the reversal of our fortunes. The news this year justifies our confidence. There has been a rise in overall income to £22 million-plus, and the Society's deficit has been reduced to only £160,000, an improvement of more than £400,000 compared with 1980/81.

Next year, for the first time in seven years, we will break even and perhaps have a surplus. This has not been achieved by luck—but by constantly aiming for higher standards of efficiency and management."

Despite the economic recession, it had been an outstandingly successful year, she said, and if the Society had not been forced to pay over £300,000 in Value Added Tax, there would have been no deficit at all.

THE new Executive Council meeting immediately after the AGM opted for continuity when electing the Honorary Officers of The Society.

Mrs Joyce Smith will continue as Chairman, and her Vice-Chairmen once again will be Mr Derek Ashcroft and Mr Lowerth Thomas.

Mr William Huddleston continued as Honorary Treasurer.

But we cannot afford to be complacent, warned Mrs Smith.

The Society had waged a vigorous campaign against the "iniquitous burden" of VAT and received support from the public and MPs. "We have not yet achieved our aim, but we have not given up and the campaign will continue."

Fund raising must be efficient if we are to do more than merely maintain our existing services, she said, but nothing should detract from the value of the work done by the volunteers. The importance of the local groups within the whole Society was being more and more readily acknowledged and great efforts made to strengthen the communications between the groups and the central Society.

The Society was poised on the threshold of an era of expansion and change, said Mrs Smith, and went on "This is an opportunity to look at the way ahead with a new maturity, to thank those hardworking pioneers for 'fathering' the Society, and to bridge the generation gap by relating our past experiences to our aspirations for the future. We can look back on our first generation of existence with pride, but we must look at ourselves with a critical eye, for there are still neglected areas in our Society."

The pioneering role

Continued on Page 4



● Mrs Joyce Smith, Chairman, presents members of the Executive Council (from left to right) Mr William Huddleston, Mr K. O. Coulbeck, Dr R. J. Firman, Dr Millicent Regan, and retiring members Mr Alex Moira and Mr William Burn. Both Mr Moira and Mr Burn later received special awards from the Duchess of Kent (see page 12).

Young spastic people must play vital role in Society's future

THERE was a stimulating exchange of views between the officers of The Spastics Society and the delegates at the conference which followed the AGM.

The emphasis was on the future, a future which will be more professional and involve to an increasing extent the views and participation of the rising generation of young spastic people.

So lively was the debate that the assembled delegates even heard a spirited defence of Arthur Scargill...

The conference began with a lucid exposition by Andrew Ross, Director of Marketing, of why the Society has to become more and more like any large business enterprise if it is to sustain development over the next 30 years.

"We must realise that we are in an increasingly competitive world," said Mr Ross.

He pointed out that over the past 10 years an extra 6,000 charities have been created every year, and that there are currently 112 charities with an income over £1 million.

There is potential for the future in charitable promotions by industry, similar to the recent Heinz "Save a Baby" campaign, which offers mutual benefits to both charities and business.

Deeds of Covenant in particular offer great scope for

the future. If a subscriber makes a commitment for a minimum of four years the charity can reclaim income tax which at the basic rate of 30 per cent means that every £1 donated can be increased to £1.43.

The theme of professionalism was taken up by Mrs Ann Hithersay, Director of Regions, who appealed to the various regional organisations to make available "unused" money to help care for spastic people.

She suggested that of the current regional assets of £4 million about £2 million could be made available to provide more services.

"I know that every good housekeeper puts a little away for a rainy day," said Mrs Hithersay. "For spastic people the rainy day is now."

She offered to the assembled delegates the help of a team of experts from both London and the regions to investigate sources of revenue funding, and suggested that one of the main targets for new funds should be the young spastic school leavers, who at present are virtually becoming prisoners in their own homes.

"I believe that the regional organisation has a very great part to play in working with the groups and the central Society to see that these needs are met," said Mrs Hithersay.

In the discussion that followed there were several impressive contributions from spastic people who raised questions about attitudes towards spastic people, whether the North was a forgotten area, how we can help the

severely handicapped, and the lip service paid to the law which dictates that three per cent of industrial employees should be handicapped people.

Bill Hargreaves even managed to get in a plug for Arthur Scargill after one stereotyped reference to the miners' leader as a bogeyman.

"I have spoken to Arthur Scargill," said Mr Hargreaves, "and he has pledged the full support of his executive for The Spastics Society."

Mr Tim Yeo, Director of the Society, in reply to the questions from the floor pinpointed the dilemma of how to portray what the Society is doing in the emotional way which is often necessary to attract sympathy, without stimulating the impression that spastic people are not normal members of society.

He said that the Society was more united than it had been for some time, that financial stability had been restored, that talk of redundancies had dried up to be replaced by speculation about what the next development was going to be.

At the end of the conference, confidence in the future was buoyant but not complacent.

As one of the speakers from the floor, Chris Walters from the Maidstone Group, himself a spastic person said, encapsulating the enormous task which still lies ahead.

"There was a victory parade for those who fought in the Falklands. There is no victory parade for the unemployed and the disabled."

AGM tribute to Bernard Brett



● SUE MYERS, reading the words of Bernard Brett.

AT the heart of the AGM proceedings were several moments of sadness as delegates remembered Bernard Brett who was due to speak to them, but died recently.

The Chairman, Mrs Joyce Smith, insisted that his name was kept on the agenda as one of the speakers — and in a sense he did speak to the meeting with some eloquence as Sue Myers, who was one of Bernard's helpers read out his own account of his life and struggles.

In addition, at the back of the hall there was an exhibition of photographs taken of Bernard in his various capacities as a worker on behalf of people who were also disabled.

Executive Council election

THE elections to the Executive Council were closely contested with less than 50 votes separating the candidates at the top and bottom of the poll.

There were eight candidates bidding to fill the six places on the Council which were up for election.

The result of the poll was as follows: Valerie Lang 99, Derek Ashcroft 90, Iorwerth Thomas 85, Douglas Shapland 80, John Byworth 77, Adrian Wright 64, Clement Wood 59, Ronald Gerver 53.

New man

John Byworth is the only one of the successful candidates to whom the Executive Council will be a completely new experience.

Derek Ashcroft, Valerie Lang and Iorwerth Thomas were retiring members of the Council.

Douglas Shapland was co-opted to the Council in February last year to fill a casual vacancy, while Adrian Wright served on the Council from 1972 to 1978.

New life in hospital or community care — both have advantages

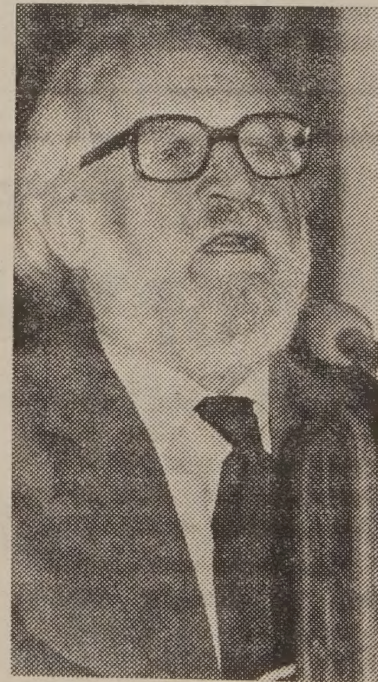
THE wind of change is blowing hard through the institutions for the mentally handicapped, but there are inevitable constraints on its speed.

This was the message from Dr G. F. Harris, Medical Administrator, St Lawrence's Hospital, Caterham, in his address to the AGM.

St Lawrence's is one of the largest institutions for mentally handicapped people in Britain, with 1,250 residents, of which 150, or 12 per cent, are spastic persons.

While declaring himself wholeheartedly in favour of the shift towards treating people in the community rather than in institutions, Dr Harris explained that the process must be in the nature of a quickstep — slow, slow, quick, quick, slow.

"Wherever we are working," he said, "we need to



● Dr Harris

look back and see what has happened. The ability to pause is an essential part of every tempered revolution."

Since 1970 when Dr Harris went to St Lawrence's there have been significant changes.

He said: "In 1970 there were 150 children under 16 housed on wards; and a

school which was run by the institution. Today there are eight children under 16, six of whom live in a separate bungalow built by funds raised from the BBC's Blue Peter appeal, and run in as homely a way as possible. The school itself is closed, the children now being educated outside in a local special school.

"In 1970 there was no structured adult education. Today the many levels of education are managed by a co-ordinator and some adults attend classes run outside St Lawrence's."

"In 1970 there was virtually no psychological involvement and the burden of the little that existed was the production of IQs for statistical purposes. Today there are six psychologists."

"In 1970 therapy departments were almost non-existent. Physiotherapy was around, grossly inadequate; and there was one part-time music therapist. Today there are well qualified persons running

Cont. on Page 5

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● The newly elected members of the Society's Executive Council (from left to right) Douglas Shapland, John Byworth, Derek Ashcroft, Valerie Lang and Iorwerth Thomas. Mr Adrian Wright was the other successful candidate.

Cont. from Page 4

New life

department of music therapy, art therapy, speech therapy and therapy for the blind.

"In 1970 there were 2,000 beds and had been for 100 years. Today there are 1,240 and still falling at a rate of more than 50 per year."

Dr Harris continued: "Already the last 10-year period has seen a degree of change and a rate of change that would have been almost as unbelievable and maybe as unwelcome to those who lived and worked in the 1950s as was the concept of space flight to the contemporaries of Jules Verne."

In making changes, however, according to Dr Harris, you are often in the position of making bricks without straw and "it is often the straw that isn't here that breaks the camel's back."

He listed four basic barriers to the pace of change: economic restraints, shortage of personnel, the absence of alternatives and the inertia accompanying the size of the institutions.

Inertia

Dr Harris went on to illustrate the sheer problems of inertia. At St Lawrence, for example, where there are 1,200 people and 1,000 staff housed in a vast Victorian building, which would have to be blown up rather than fall down. "There is a task of such formidable proportions that it is easier to hope the problem will go away."

On the dangers of change he pointed out the dilemma of those who would concentrate resources on community services and care, a policy which would be restricting further expenditure on the institutions severely affect the quality of life there.

"There are still 45,000 people in institutions for the mentally handicapped and many of these are also spastics. There are still very many who are adolescent or young adults and have very many years of living ahead of them."

"A large proportion have no hope of an alternative for the future and will grow old in institutions unless there is an unlikely upsurge in national prosperity of an unprecedented kind."

There was one further warning about change from Dr Harris who declared honestly his belief that "all change is not necessarily for the better."

In some areas he suggested severely handicapped people may be better off in institutions than living out in the community.

"More research is needed so that a genuine evaluation can be produced. I think that a wider survey needs to be made of the average life of hostel residents to see how much they are able to make use of community facilities. In a limited experience I feel there are some areas in which the more profoundly handicapped live a life with less variety and colour than is provided in some institutions," he said.

Firm's gift to Achievement Award Girl Becky gets her computer

LITTLE Becky Osborne, the 11-year-old who was one of the winners of this year's Special Achievement Award, presented by The Spastics Society, has finally got her heart's desire.

She is the proud owner of a brand new Commodore VIC 20 colour home computer, generously supplied free of charge by Commodore Business Machines (UK) Ltd.

When Becky came to London a few months ago to receive her £50 award she declared her intention of using the money to buy herself a computer.

Becky, who was born with Spinal Atrophy Werdnig Hoffman Syndrome, cannot sit, stand or walk, is tiny, weighs only two stone, and is in some form of pain or discomfort all the time.



• BECKY Osborne with her new computer watched by Mr Lawrence Reeves, managing director of the Carmarthen firm who supplied her with it.

Too stiff

Her mother took Becky into one of the London branches of W. H. Smith to try out a computer but she found the keys too stiff to use on that model.

Talking with Becky at the award ceremony TV personality Esther Rantzen, who was presenting the prizes, suggested to Becky that she should try a Commodore VIC, which she did and found she could use.

Brian Osborn, Becky's father wrote to Commodore explaining that she was taught at home, being

too ill to attend even special school "but mentally is very bright and we have difficulty keeping up with her active mind," and asking for details of the computer.

Commodore agreed to give Becky what she wanted and the local firm which provided the machine, Reeves Computers of Carmarthen supplied some software cartridges, both games and educational, also free of charge.

As soon as the computer was delivered life changed drastically not only for Becky but also for her parents.

"As it was a colour computer Becky installed it in the lounge for quite a while so she could connect it up to the colour television," said Mrs J. Osborn, Becky's mother. "Until I kicked her out."

"I didn't see why I should sit in the kitchen watching a black and white television while she monopolised the lounge. Now she is in the kitchen with the computer linked up to the black and white set. It is on at least two or three hours a day."

Becky is delighted with her new computer because she only gets two hours

home tuition a day and living in the countryside at Portdinorwic, Gwynedd, Wales, has a lot of time on her hands.

dous difference to her life. She is already learning how to programme the computer with the help of her father who is used to using the computer at work.

The VIC 20 is a very sophisticated home computer which is also used in industry for business applications, as data entry terminals, for controlling robots and many other practical uses.

It will enable Becky to expand her horizons.

Help for family centre

LOCAL groups have once again responded very generously to the appeal for financial help towards the running costs of the Family Services and Assessment Centre at Fitzroy Square. So far a total of £6,180 has been contributed by 33 local groups. In addition some financial help has come from Regional Funds.

A number of local groups also supported Joe Hughes in his marathon wheelchair push in aid of the Fitzroy Square centre which this year raised £2,925.24.

Conference on integration

THE integration of handicapped children into ordinary schools is the subject of a one-day conference to be held in Altrincham, near Manchester, on Tuesday, December 7.

Jointly organised by The Spastics Society and The Advisory Centre for Education the conference is a repeat of a similar conference which was held in May and was oversubscribed. Delegates to the conference will include teachers working in both ordinary and special schools, education administrators and the parents of children with special needs.

Confident Chairman at AGM

Cont. from Page 3

must continue. "In this age of rapidly advancing technology we must be sure to harness progress to the needs of disabled people. The rise of the microchip could be the biggest single factor we have ever encountered, in improving the life-style and standard of living of handicapped people."

But if we are concerned about the quality of life for disabled people, we should also be concerned about the discrimination so many of them encounter, she said.

"Basic human rights demand that a harder line should be taken to end the cruel rejection and discrimination, so often practiced by the unimaginative and ill-informed. It is unlawful to discriminate against others on the grounds of race, sex, colour or creed, yet we allow handicapped people to be refused admittance to such public places as restaurants, theatres and cinemas."

"Perhaps it is time WE demanded anti-discrimination legislation. I am not for one moment suggesting that legislation would cure all the problems of discrimination, and I am aware that it would be difficult to enforce, but it would make people more aware. "The very fact that they would have to

think about the situation would be a step in the right direction."

Mrs Smith spoke of some of the priorities for the future—the plight of handicapped people in subnormality hospitals; adolescents and young adults—"a sorely neglected age group"—and the continuing efforts for future generations through the "Save a Baby" campaign.

The Chairman concluded her speech optimistically: "We have emerged from times of severe financial restraint to new hopes for the future. Our energies are more positively channelled and our targets and aims are clear. I do not doubt for a moment that we can look towards a time of regeneration and that even more of our ambitions will be realised in the next 30 years."

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Princess Anne flies in to a warm w



● The Society's Chairman, Mrs Joyce Smith, introduces the Society's Treasurer to Princess Anne. In the background Mrs Smith's husband, Peter.



● A moment to remember for pupil Michelle Woodford, chosen to present the bouquet to Princess Anne. Deputy Head Teacher Cheryll Donovan is in the background.



● Commemorative rosettes from the Princess for pupils Terry Adair and Alex Takyi, and standing behind their wheelchairs in the presentation line-up are voluntary helper Susanne Bell and Chris Rutherford, physio aide.



● Mrs Royda Lewis, manager of the Riding Centre, told Princess Anne about the "fairy tale idea" which led to the creation of the wonderful new facilities for the children at the school.

THE new Indoor Riding School at Meldreth Manor School started as a "fairy tale idea" to give 12 handicapped children the chance to ride.

So it was fitting that when the idea became a reality a Princess should come along to declare it officially open.

Princess Anne, herself a famous rider, arrived by helicopter at The Spastics Society's school, near Royston, Herts, to perform the opening ceremony in front of the children at the school and an invited audience of 700 people.

After a welcome from Mrs Joyce, Smith, the Chairman, and Mr Tim Yeo, Director of the Society, the Princess unveiled a commemorative plaque, then watched as 12 children from the school gave a 15-minute demonstration of how severely

handicapped youngsters can overcome the problems of riding.

She then presented them with commemorative rosettes (which every child in the school later received also) before going walk-about around the splendid new indoor school, then visiting a special display in the school buildings and having lunch there.

During the course of her visit the Princess heard the story of how the idea for the school was translated into reality.

"I personally feel that it was rather a fairy tale idea which people cottoned on to," said Royda Lewis, Centre Manager of the new school.

"We have had a Riding For The Disabled section in the school for some years but only 10 children went riding for one hour a week. It has always been a dream to have our own facilities."

The stimulus came when Blue Peter, the BBC's children's programme,

decided to do some filming at the school.

"This was the spur to get fund raising off the ground and we had only two weeks to decide how to launch it," recalls Royda Lewis. "I blitzed all the schools within a 30 miles radius asking the children to watch the programme about our school."

"That was in February 1981 just at the beginning of IYDP Year. By October 11 we had £45,000!"

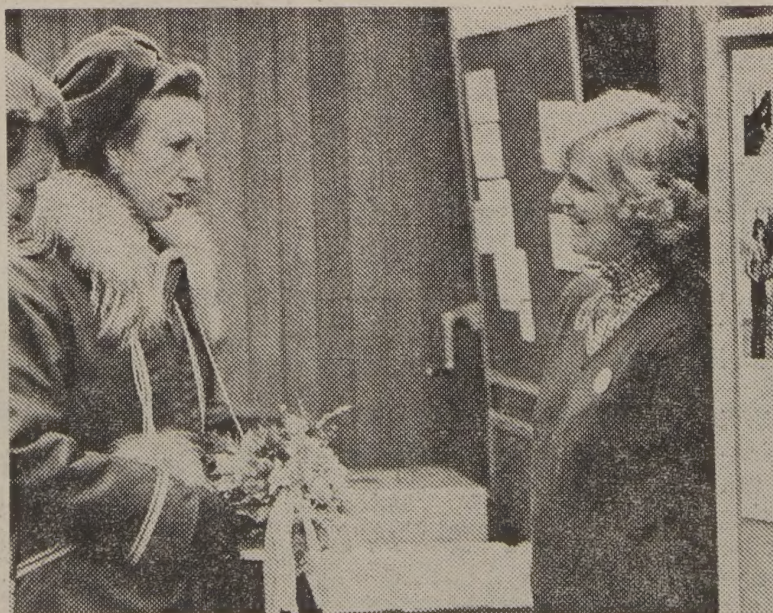
Of this total £11,000 came from the schools Royda had "blitzed." She also wrote to every riding club in the country and they responded generously. Local businessmen and farmers dug deeply into

their pockets and the idea caught the imagination of children all over the country.

"There were kids, little tots, all over the country, organising jumble sales on our behalf," said Royda.

The fund of generosity right on their own doorstep was augmented by the Royal Engineers from the nearby barracks who agreed to build the new school for only the cost of their expenses. This was not the first time the Army had helped the school, for on a previous occasion they had built a bridge across a river for the school.

When the parent of one of the pupils secured



● Superintendent physiotherapist Jane Joester tells the Princess about the advanced techniques which help the severely handicapped children at Meldreth Manor.

Job training in aided by EEC

THE Spastics Society's Sully Work Centre in Wales has just achieved a unique first by attracting a £22,000 grant from the European Economic Commission.

The grant will go towards the setting up of a three-year training scheme designed to qualify 14 workers at the centre for normal industrial work.

The announcement of the grant was the culmination of two years of discussions, lobbying and persuasion by Society officers both in Wales, at headquarters, and in Strasbourg and Brussels.

The initial application to

the EEC was made by Moll Pritchard, Senior Regional Officer, Wales Region, who became the moving spirit behind the subsequent efforts to persuade the EEC to make the grant, and the Manpower Services Commission that the centre could handle it.

Unique

The aid of local Welsh Euro MPs was enlisted and the grant was unique in being granted to a charity, which attracted local authority support.

The difficulty was overcome by making the grant specific for the purpose of training workers for jobs in industry.

Welcome at Meldreth Manor School



● Pupils Michelle Young looks delighted at her meeting with the Princess who has done so much to encourage riding as a sport for the disabled. Also in the picture are Frances Phillips and Bette Hatchett.



● Voluntary helper Jane Wilsher leads pupil Geraldine Henson's pony, helped by helper Glenys Wainwright and Sue Clark, physio aide. The demonstration at the opening ceremony amply showed the great enjoyment most handicapped children gain from riding.

ks to rue

£6,000 worth of roofing for the new indoor school the project was well and truly launched.

Now all 120 children at Meldreth Manor will be able to ride every week. Royda has been building up what she describes as a "horse mountain," consisting of nine ponies and a donkey which pulls a cart.

As the school is built to the right specifications to hold full scale show jumping events the plan is to hire it out.

"It is beautiful to look at and not just a barn," says Royda Lewis.

A fairy tale come true, in fact, and fit for a Princess.

Wales grant

"We cannot, of course, guarantee that the jobs will be there at the end of three years," says Mr T. Smith, manager of the Sully Centre, near Penarth, "but we can guarantee that they will have been thoroughly trained for them."

The training scheme for the 14 workers is being closely tailored to fit in with the needs of local industry as they arise over the period of the scheme.

Mr Smith sees the grant as only being the first of several — and, in addition, an example to other centres.

"If one centre can do it," he says, "I see no logical reason why others cannot do it as well."



● Princess Anne appeared to be interested in all aspects of the work at Meldreth Manor School, and her teacher Len Reed tells her about the horticultural programme.



● Intently watching the riding display, the Lord Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire, Sir Peter Proby, the Princess, Mr Tim Yeo, the Society's Director, and Mrs Smith.

A lack of words, but not of understanding

TRAVELLING down the coast of Yugoslavia during the mid 1960s — before the tourist industry really developed there — my car broke down. I could not speak a single word of the language and I found myself in an unusual and awkward position.

I could not find anyone who spoke either English or French and for a while, therefore, communication through speech was impossible. Eventually, by a combination of sign language and other means I was able to make myself understood and obtained the assistance I needed.

I was reminded of this when I read the results of a survey which showed that a substantial number of people believe that anyone who has a speech handicap is mentally handicapped too. This belief is, of course, utterly without foundation, but it clearly underlines the fact that it is often the attitudes of people in the community which represent an even greater burden to handicapped individuals than their original disability.

THE DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

Tim Yeo writes to you.

When I was in Yugoslavia, I was not regarded by the local population as being mentally handicapped. Although my situation in practical terms was similar to that of a person with a severe speech impairment, I was simply regarded as a foreign tourist who couldn't speak the language.

So what is it that makes even well-informed people dismiss someone who cannot communicate with normal speech as being not worth talking to and likely to be mentally handicapped? This is illogical and unfair. Sadly, the frustration felt by speech impaired and many other handicapped people is an all too regular part of their daily lives.

This problem is not

something which a smart, modern work centre or an improved residential environment does anything to help. There is, in my view, a very real danger that organisations like The Spastics Society will tend to concentrate — for the best of reasons — on tangible services for cerebral palsied people which can be seen to be located in physical buildings.

The services and buildings are, of course, important and should never be belittled, but they really are only a part of the overall battle. The other part which, for many people, is the most important, is the changing of attitudes.

It is the normality of handicap which we have got to impress upon the minds of ordinary people.

Until we have convinced them that a speech impaired person is no more or less likely to be mentally handicapped than a foreign tourist who cannot speak English, then we have done little to enable handicapped people to lead fulfilling lives.

The example which I have chosen is an extreme one but the problem is representative of discriminatory and isolationist attitudes which the able-bodied adopt towards disabled people.

It is our job in The Spastics Society to seek every opportunity of educating the public into more positive attitudes and to portray disability in its proper context. Every

individual person, handicapped or non-handicapped, is a member of the community and contributes to it. Every individual person has advantages in some respects and disadvantages in others.

We have come to call some of these disadvantages "handicap," but our view of what constitutes handicap is a narrow, traditional, and often prejudiced one. Until the community appreciates that handicap is a normal part of life, and its adverse impact can be minimised by the adoption of common sense attitudes by individuals throughout society, then a great part of our task remains undone.

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Pie in the sky?

I READ in Spastics News (October) that your Chairman would like to see a law banning discrimination against the disabled. A marvellous idea, but would it work any better than the pie in the sky laws which are supposed to stop discriminations on grounds of sex and race. No chance, I'm afraid, but keep trying!

J. Wilkins (Mr),
Brighton,
Sussex.

She was thrilled

I HAD Spastics News sent to me by a British pen pal, and I was so thrilled with it that I should like to be a subscriber.

I am a 36-year-old spastic woman, working in the Stockholm Immigrant Service as an interpreter, counsellor and social worker.

I am now helping a group of Greek-speaking handicapped persons to organise themselves here in Sweden. Would anybody like to drop me a line for mutual help, advice and for the exchange of ideas? Maybe you would like to publish my letter in the next issue?

ROSIE KIHLOLM,
Valhallavägen 152 B,
S-115 24 Stockholm,
Sweden.

The sights in Spain

IN conjunction with a travel firm for the disabled I recently had a holiday in Calella on the Costa Brava in Spain with financial help from Maidstone Spastics Society.

The hotel was full of both disabled and able-bodied holidaymakers taking their annual holidays, and the fun and games we

Congratulations from Canada



Ronnie, Mary and John Walker.

FOR a long time, we have been enjoying your excellent publication Spastics News. It contains a wealth of information and the articles are always thoughtfully and provocatively presented. We always learn something from your fine newspaper.

In your August issue, you featured a beautiful, heartwarming article headed: "Are They The Most Devoted Parents in Britain?" We were wondering if you could elaborate on the article by answering the following three questions:

- Was any medical reason given why the parents had three children with cerebral palsy?
- How did the two able-bodied children feel about

being raised in that atmosphere?

- Are the parents concerned about the future of the three disabled children when they will no longer be able to care for them?

Once again, we congratulate you on producing such a superb publication.

MONA WINBERG,
Editor, Participaper,
Ontario Federation for
the Cerebral Palsied,
Toronto,
Canada.

The answers:

No medical reason was given.

The two other children, Vera and Diane, came to take the disabilities of their brothers and sister for granted and were, according to their mother, a great help.

Yes, Mr and Mrs Walker worry about the future, but Vera and Diane have reassured them that they will look after the welfare of Mary, Jon and Ronnie.

all enjoyed together made a perfect holiday for us all.

The topless bathers certainly are one of the sights of the age!

Three cheers to the Chalfont Line for providing such a good holiday.

CHRISTOPHER
WALTERS,
23 Clement Court,
Maidstone,
Kent.

Mad on motor sport

I AM writing to your letters column to request that you publish a plea for me. This is that I am desperately trying to find a "friendly" and "tame" clerk of the course who would be prepared to allow a disabled (ambulant) motor sport fanatic to assist him/her as an assistant clerk at a motor sport event.

I have a burning desire to hold this position at an event, but have been constantly refused simply because I am disabled, although I have some seven years knowledge of motor sport organisation.

If there is anyone in the South East area who would be willing to help me achieve my ambition I would be delighted to hear from them.

Ronald Cottrell,
87 Cedar Road,
Strood,
Rochester,
Kent ME2 3JN.

WE would like to find pen friends to write to in other parts of the country. Can you help?

Cleveland Spastics Centre,
Acklam Road,
Middlesbrough,
Cleveland.

- More requests for pen friends below!

EAST Herts Golf Club's first pro-celebrity tournament put a smile on the face of Mr John Rowe, Head of Mailing Appeal for The Spastics Society. After the event he received a cheque on behalf of the Society for £2,645.

LETTERS

In defence of his hostel

AS regards to the article in Spastics News referring to Amershall House, I consider it unfair and extremely biased and that you are unaware of the true facts of the situation.

I challenge you to do one of two things, or both, one — publish this letter; two — send down a representative to see for himself that your article, for the most part, was playing on the emotions of individuals and was just sensational journalism.

The couple you referred to are entitled to their own opinion, which is their right. As disabled people there are things that we cannot do without, as far as personal attention is concerned, much as we would like to. We have to adapt to personal circumstances beyond our control.

This home is far from a "hostel" — you made it sound just like a "doss house".

Residents in this home have their own individual rooms, the staff only come in to do the necessary work, such as attending to the residents needs, and cleaning, unless they are personally invited.

If one does not put anything into the home where one lives one can hardly be expected to get anything out of it. The couple concerned choose to keep themselves to themselves so their wish for the most part was respected by both

residents and staff.

In this home there is a remarkable relationship between residents and staff, so much so that it is not uncommon for staff to give up their own personal time to take residents on holiday.

I have been a resident here for eight years so I think my experience gives me the right and duty to uphold the high standards that the Doncaster Authority is willing to try and provide for us, but any successful venture has got to be a two-way affair.

Several years ago I had some personal difficulties, which are not necessary to go into here, but sufficient to say I received a compassionate hearing both from the people in charge and the Doncaster Authorities themselves.

This is all I have to say on the matter, but I am prepared at all cost to defend the good name of this home.

Tommy Fallon,
Amersall House,
Amersall Road,
Doncaster.

● MR Fallon's spirited defence is against an imagined attack. Nowhere does the article criticise Amersall House but merely states the fact that it is not designed for married couples and cannot, by its very nature, ensure the sort of privacy they require.

YOUR ADS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE 11th National Course / Conference of the National Council for Special Education will be held at the Bristol Polytechnic from Tuesday, April 5, to Friday, April 8, 1983.

The theme of the conference is "Relationships, Responsibility and Recreation; the new three Rs." In addition to lectures and a wide variety of options sessions there will be several exhibitions.

The outline programme and booking form is available from Mr D. Lott, 8 The Drive, Henleaze, Bristol, BS9 4LD.

SUSAN White is looking for a penfriend, male or female. She is 29 years old, lives at 222 King's Mead, Pontefract, West Yorkshire, likes pop music, listening to records and letter writing.

FOR sale. A year-old Pashley electric tricycle, battery driven, front wheel drive, will travel up to 20 miles without recharging. The asking price is £300, including delivery. Inquiries to Roy West, Head of Establishment, Avon County Council, Dovercourt Road Workshop, Bristol BS7 9SF.

A GROUP of disabled people is planning to produce a number of programmes for television on disability. If you are interested in contributing in any way please contact: Chris Davies, 22 Pinetree Avenue, Nocton, Birkenhead, Wirral, Merseyside.

JOSEPHINE Dickson would like to increase her circle of penfriends. She is 27 years old, cerebral palsied and is looking for a man or woman about the same age to write to her at 44 Holmfild Lane, Pontefract, West Yorkshire, WF8 2NF.

BRIGHT, intelligent lady, aged 32, of pleasant looks and appearance, wishes to meet interesting companion for friendship with view to marriage. Enjoys conversation, reading, gardening and country walks. Can walk, but drinks through a straw. Lives alone. Wishes to meet person who can look after himself, preferably living in or near NW Lancashire, but not necessarily so.

Write Box 109, Spastics News, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ.

WANTED for one week in 1983, a companion / escort for a 42-year-old lady teacher wishing to go on holiday abroad, preferably to a country where she could visit places of architectural and artistic beauty. Can negotiate stairs with rail and gets around indoors with sticks. Uses a chair outdoors. Needs NO help with personal care and is light in weight. Lady is prepared to pay hotel and travelling expenses.

Replies to Admin Assistant (Holidays), c/o Spastics News (address as above).

WANTED, a second-hand adult tricycle. Anyone with one for sale should contact: Jane Eppstein, 12 Founders News, Heath Hill, Milton Keynes, MK14 6HT, or phone 0908 660425.

FOR SALE, £600 or offer, A. and B. Ranger electrical wheelchair. Capable of climbing kerbs. Only 18 months old. Cost £1,300. Tel 01-641 2611.

DAY Course — New Developments in Technology, Saturday, December 4, 1982. This intensive Day Course covers a broad range of technical aids, equipment and techniques developed for physically and multiply disabled children. Inquiries to: Headmaster, Penhurst School, National Children's Home, Chipping Norton, OX7 5LN. Tel 0608 2539.

JANE and Gordon offer holidays to handicapped people of all ages, throughout the year in our bungalow in Norfolk. We aim to give a personal and homely service with full board included, and are within easy reach of Sandringham and many places of interest around Norfolk. We have had several years experience as houseparents looking after handicapped people and can offer a relaxed and peaceful holiday at home. If you are interested and would like more details please ring 0328 70 315 or write to Jane and Gordon at "The Oaks," Fakenham Road, Tittleshall, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE32 2PH.

A ONE-DAY conference on "Disability and Technology" will take place at the Moota Hotel, Aspatria, Cumberland, on November 26, 1982. It will cover a broad range of technical aids equipment and techniques developed for physically handicapped people.

Further details from Miss E. Clarke, Principal Training Officer, Cumbria County Council Social Services Dept, 3 Victoria Place, Carlisle, Cumbria CA1 1EH.

ASHLEY Mobility of Birmingham has now opened a Power and Hand Propelled Wheelchair Sales and Service Department at 45 Swiss Road, Weston-super-Mare. Telephone 26011. Ashley Mobility are distributors for the Vessa Ltd and Everest and Jennings Ltd range of power and hand propelled wheelchairs in Avon and Somerset and a comprehensive sales and service operation is now being run from the above address. A swift and efficient service of wheelchairs of all makes is guaranteed and inquiries welcomed.

READERS of Spastics News may be interested to hear of Spastic Fellowship, a quarterly magazine published in Liverpool, which contains stories, articles and poems and provides a regular forum for the exchange of ideas.

The magazine, which costs 15p a copy, plus postage, is available from Miss Angers, Angers House, 2 Church Road, Liverpool L15 9EA.

Your Legacy

The Spastics Society provides a wide variety of care, education and welfare services.

Your legacy can enable us to give spastic people a greater chance in life.

Information concerning legacies in favour of the Society is available from Bernard Sharpe, Legacies Dept. The Spastics Society 12 Park Crescent London W1N 4EQ

Telephone 01-636 5020 Ext. 127

THE SPASTICS SOCIETY

Their dramatic roles in launch of Channel 4

THERE was extra special interest in the opening night of Television's new Channel 4 for residents at Drummonds, The Spastics Society's residential centre, and Good Neighbours House, the unit run by The Stars Organisation For Spastics.

For people from both centres took part, as extras, in "Walter," the controversial film about life in a mental hospital.

Neil Wintle, aged 27, from Good Neighbours House, actually saw his name "up in lights" in the cast list after playing the part of one of the inmates, who met a violent death;

while both Drummonds and Good Neighbours House received an acknowledgement in the credits.

There has been a drama group at Drummonds, which is at Feering, Colchester, for some time, and after Nigel Evans, the Producer of "Walter," saw their Christmas pantomime he chose 10 of the group as extras.

Ability

"He wanted extras who understood what they would be doing in the film, had acting ability and were stable," said Tom Czerwich, Deputy Warden at Drummonds.

The 10 chosen were Ken Wylie, Robert Vaines, Alec Richmond, Terence Doo, Jack Blizzard, Robert Parker, Victor Boyd,

David Osborne, Andrew Williamson and Billy McGowan.

They were augmented by Dermot Byrne, the Senior Housefather at Drummonds, who is an experienced amateur actor, involved in the drama group, and Adrian Donovan, a Housefather.

They all spent two weeks in London, staying for part of the time at Fitzroy Square, the Society's Family Assessment Centre, while filming went on in a former mental hospital in North London. They were paid £25 a day plus expenses.

Just how much they enjoyed the experience was

summed up by Billy McGowan, who was interviewed on the TV programme "Link" and said: "All good things must come to an end."

Tom Czerwich described the impact of the programme when seen on television as "excellent, shocking, and disturbing."

Champagne

At Good Neighbours House, the Manager Mrs E. P. Mitchelmore-Hawkins was well prepared for the showing of the film and broke open three bottles of champagne.

Apart from Neil Wintle,

the crowd scenes in the drama had been filled out by Michael Solomons, Leon Torian, Ernest Upton, Alan Quarry and Bernard Smith, all of whom volunteered when the producer and director approached Good Neighbours House, which is situated in Camberwell, south east London, not far from where the film was being shot.

"There was a very mixed feeling about the film," said Mrs Mitchelmore-Hawkins. "There were two of our residents who left halfway through. One of them, Bill Howe, who was in a mental hospital for 25 years, couldn't stand

to watch any more and said 'that was just how it was'."

All the residents at Drummonds and Good Neighbours House who took part in the film were invited to a special premiere presentation at a theatre in London on the day before Channel 4 opened.

Praise

Collectively they played their part in launching the new television channel on a highly dramatic note, which in spite of its shock effects drew widespread praise, exemplified in the comment of the Times reviewer who said that "Walter must rank as one of the most successful television films of recent years."

Visitors from China admire Society's work

BRITAIN and China met on common ground at The Spastics Society headquarters.

As part of its European tour organised by UNESCO a high powered Chinese Observation Mission spent a day at the Society's headquarters learning about the British way of caring.

The head of the mission Mr Zheng, Director of the Social Welfare Bureau is the Chinese Minister responsible for the welfare of all the one billion Chinese people.

He was accompanied by Ms Yang Yaming, deputy clinic chief, Shanghai Children's Institute; Ms Zhang Ping, chief, Nanjing Children's Welfare Institute; Mr Lin Shang-xun, deputy division head, Beijing Social Welfare Institute and Mr Wang Guezhong, interpreter.

The mission, which also visited Sheffield, Manchester and Winchester, before going on to Sweden was particularly interested in studying services for disabled children.

Having the largest population in the world China has a handicap problem of similar dimensions, with 3½ million disabled children to care for.

Having met Mr Wynn Evans to discuss The Spastics Society's educational services, they then visited Fitzroy Square, the Society's Family Services and Assessment Centre.

Margaret Morgan, Controller of Social Services spoke about the Society's social services; Jean Potterton, Head Of Social Work outlined attitudes to social work and the visitors saw the film "We Are Your Neighbours."

So impressed were they with the film, and especially the way it showed how disabled people could live

independently in the community, that Mr Derek Lancaster Gaye, the Society's Deputy Director presented Mr Li with a copy to take back to China.

After a tour of the Fitzroy Square facilities the Chinese visitors went off to visit the Richard Cloudsley School, but not before an unscheduled meeting with Lin Berwick, who is both blind and cerebral palsied and happened to be staying at Fitzroy Square.

She spoke to them about her life and attitudes to disablement.

"They were deeply impressed by her," said Margaret Morgan.

The Chinese also met and talked with three spastic couples who were at the centre on a course of study about marriage and setting up home.

"The reason they were so taken with the film," said Miss Morgan, "is that in China the disabled either live with their families or they are in institutions. There doesn't seem to be any disabled people in China actually living out in the community."

Cash for Daresbury

THE Daresbury Hall building fund has received a £3,000 boost from the trust fund set up by E. B. Ward founder of Ward Blenkinsop and Co, the Widnes-based chemicals manufacturers. The company, which is one of the world's largest manufacturers of the chemicals used in synthetic penicillins, has, in addition, already donated £2,000 to The Spastics Society this year.

Workers help disabled



BILL Hargreaves, Industrial Liaison Officer, The Spastics Society (left) with John van Maurik, Personnel Executive of Plessey Radar Ltd (centre) and Dr Burman, Chairman of the North Surrey Spastics Group after the presentation of a cheque to the Kingston Work Centre from employees of the company.

When the total amount donated weekly by the employees at Plessey's works is fully covenanted it will be worth £820 a year to the centre.

The first cheque was handed over to Sue Portlock, one of the workers at the Kingston Centre, by Mr Len Robinson, an AUEW shop steward at Plessey Radar.

Mr van Maurik said at the presentation that it was extremely important to keep the spirit of IYDP alive in industry and that a lot could be learnt from the disabled.

VAT battle rolls on

Cont. from Page 1

suggested to us," said Sir Geoffrey, "but we were forced to conclude that there was no way of operating such a relief in an efficient and fair manner."

He said that refunding VAT to as many as 250,000 potential claimants would, in order to provide minimum control over potential abuse and error, require several hundred extra VAT staff.

"We think the cost of administration would be of the order of 10 pence for each pound refunded, making this a monstrously inefficient way of channeling help to charities," he wrote.

Limiting exemption to the caring charities would, says the Chancellor, lead to difficulties of definition; limiting it to charities of a certain size would lead to anomalies.

In refusing the Reform Group's request for another meeting Sir Geoffrey concludes his letter to Mr Yeo on a note which suggests there is little room for progress.

"I have to say that I can see very little room left for fruitful discussions on VAT and charities—the ground has been

explored so thoroughly in the recent past."

The Charities' VAT Reform Group estimates that its members lose at least £5 million a year in VAT.

Figures like these stiffen the Group's resolve to gain relief, and Mr Yeo told Spastics News that it was seen as a hopeful sign that the Chancellor had concentrated on administrative difficulties rather than the cost. The Group was now carrying out research to counter these arguments, he said, and in addition there would be a Parliamentary meeting at the end of November in an effort to gain even more support from MP's for the campaign.

"We are certainly not giving up," he declared.

LEICESTER'S disabled people have been given a unique opportunity to take up horticulture in a specially adapted garden.

The special garden for the handicapped is at Evington Park and its aim is to show people how gardening can be made easier and at the same time to provide a pleasant environment.

A seaside holiday?

IF you like to be beside the seaside in winter — and there are a lot of people who prefer it — then Colwall Court Hotel in Bexhill-on-Sea, Sussex, awaits you.

The hotel, which is run by the Stars Organisation For Spastics, has vacancies in November and over the Christmas holidays.

Although the hotel normally caters for children between the ages of five and 16, it will welcome adults also during the pre-Christmas period.

There are vacancies for eight people in the week beginning October 30; for 18 people in the period November 24 to December 4, and for 12 people for the period from the beginning of December right through to the New Year.

The price per person during November is £95 per week, rising over Christmas to £160 per week. These prices include nursing care day and night, full board, and outings every day.

Anyone interested should ring Mr William Elliott, the hotel manager, on 0424 2114961.

Rifton

EQUIPMENT FOR THE HANDICAPPED

for Children



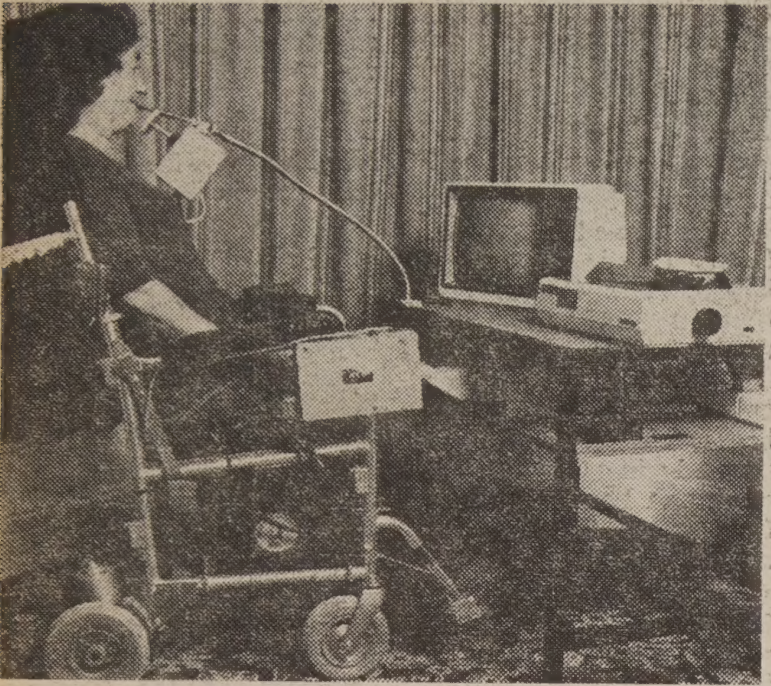
A wide variety of equipment for the handicapped child.

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Made by Community Playthings

New ideas from Naidex



● The computer plays Possum. Mary Stevenson of the Possum Users' Association operates a computer and a word processor using a suck/puff attachment.



● Fun as you learn. The latest in the Magiboards range of magnetic boards, a desk top model designed for use in special schools.



● Wet weather need not keep you at home — keeping dry in the Batricar with a new de-luxe hood costing £266.

FOR three days the Cunard International Hotel in London became a cornucopia of technology, overflowing with goodies, all designed to help handicapped people.

The sheer range of aids on show at Naidex 82 demonstrate the rapid advances being made in harnessing the microcomputer, high technology, low technology, and simple commonsense to lighten the burden of disabled people.

The sight of a policeman trying to unravel a traffic jam, outside the hotel, largely made up of invalid carriages exemplified just what a magnet the

Not yet chips with everything, but signs of a computer revolution

exhibition has become.

While it was by no means a case of microchips with everything, some of the most impressive exhibits announced the banns for the impending marriage between the computer revolution and aids for the handicapped.

Already at the sales altar is a highly fruitful union between Possum Union Ltd and the Sinclair Zx Spectrum Home Computer.

All the standard Possum controls can now be linked to the versatile powerful and compact computer to move a scanning light around the indicator panel in order to select the com-

Report by Ken Cooper

puter function required.

There are two versions of this scanning model: one built into an executive style briefcase; the other is a free standing desk-top model.

In addition, specially designed for spastic people, is the same computer with an expanded keyboard with spaced out recessed keys for easy movement. Using the commonest computer language, basic, the system can be expanded as the user's skills and needs develop. The entire range of Sinclair software; educational, leisure and business is now available to disabled people.

The Possum Text Processor offers disabled people the benefits of word processing and this also can be used in conjunction with the expanded keyboard.

The cost of computers and word processors must be calculated in hundreds of pounds, although you are buying computer power which only a decade ago would have cost tens of thousands of pounds — if it had been available!

the child's scooter with a chair which can rotate through 360 degrees; both are highly portable and lightweight.

The Levo range of wheelchairs offers a unique feature — an automatic stand up mechanism. At a flick of a switch the occupant is raised, still strapped in, to an upright position. Apart from the increased mobility and extended range of view, this automatic ability to stand up is claimed to enhance integration into social and professional life, helps prevent pressure sores, constipation, muscular atrophy and

circulatory disturbances, while increasing the vitality of the person confined to a wheelchair.

In fact giving a lift to the handicapped seemed to be a recurring theme at the exhibition.

The Econolift Chair, for example, was only one of the armchairs on display which solves the problem of people who find getting up and down out of their armchair painful and exhausting.

At a push of a button the entire chair rises slowly, gently securely and safely to an angle where you can stand for yourself supporting the arms and back at all times. Sitting down is just as easy.

Disabled children have not been forgotten and the Monarch Go Kart, attractively made in bright red, glass reinforced plastic, makes the conventional wheelchair look distinctly outmoded.

The moulded shell is fitted with a padded back and seat cushion which can be tailored to suit the driver so that the hips and knees are at right angles, a requirement for many spastic people. This is a product that many able bodied kids would love to get their hands on.

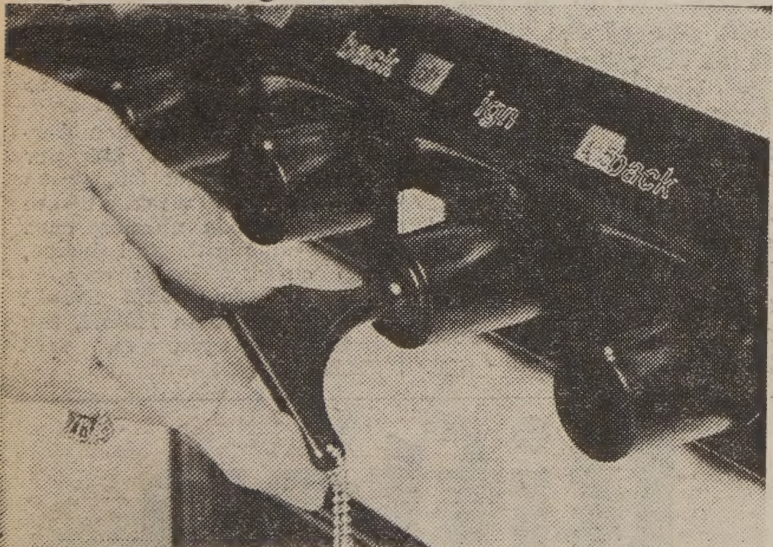
A similar appeal is made by the Theramed Rowcar which offers a manoeuvrable fun substitute to cumbersome wheelchairs and crutches, while "Hannibal" an engaging space age version of the old fashioned dog on wheels is a delightful toy which is also incidentally an aid to the handicapped.

Some of the things which caught my eye were remarkably simple in concept but eminently useful. Like the Phlexiplan Kitchen where all the units and working surfaces were non standard, meaning lower, to meet the requirements of people in wheelchairs.

Taking a bath in a giant tub full of coloured plastic balls offers some obscurely satisfying appeal but the Bubble Ball Bath is apparently not just fun but therapeutic. Developed in Germany it consists of 8,000 multicoloured hollow Bubble Balls two inches in diameter of flexible plastic in a 10-sided foam panelled enclosure.

Far from encouraging children to learn sybaritic habits the supportive ac-

Cont. on Page 11



● Cooker tap handles specially designed by British Gas for disabled people include the type shown here with an easy-to-use detachable lever.

NEW! **Downs SURGICAL**
suppliers of quality health-care products
for over a century now bring you...

DELUXE POWERED WHEELCHAIRS

Rugged dependability — armchair comfort

For young and old, this easy-to-drive electric wheelchair gives independence and freedom to those in need. Compact for indoor use, rugged for outdoor travel — up to 18 miles on a full charge. Copes with hills and kerbs. AT NO EXTRA COST, power-assisted seating adjustments and many other built-in "extras". Available through the MOTABILITY scheme for those receiving Mobility Allowance.

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Alarm

But ingenuity doesn't have to cost a lot of money as the Possum emergency alarm shows. This can be operated through either a wrist watch or a pendant, utilises an ultrasonic transmitter which causes an alarm to sound and automatically releases the front door lock to both alert a friend or neighbour and provide access.

Moving out of the world of communication into the sphere of mobility it was clear that the traditional wheelchair is rolling rapidly into the future.

In both shape and degree of sophistication some of the new models on display were barely recognisable as wheelchairs.

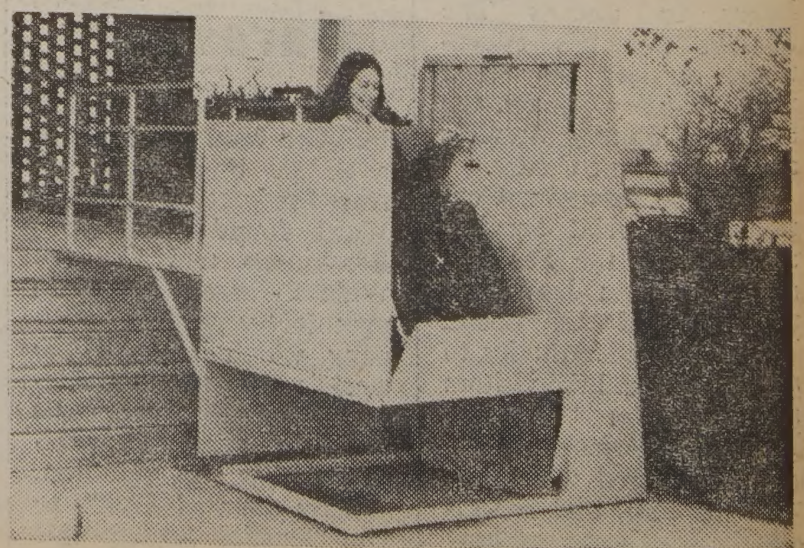
Both the A & B Scoota and the Eloyboy resemble



A lift to your life...

● Above: The Gimson Spiralift with seat can be installed on any type of staircase — even spirals.

● Right: A new porch lift to overcome the barrier of entrance steps made by Stannah Lifts.



Film caper a winner for Dene College

THE Keystone Cops are alive and well, and residing at Dene College, The Spastics Society's further education centre at Tonbridge in Kent.

The great slapstick days of the silent cinema were recalled when a silent movie made by students and teachers at the college was shown

recently at the National Film Theatre in London.

The five minute film "Cop Capers" was one of 25 films out of a total entry of 80 chosen to be shown at the National Schools Film Festival.

It won a Certificate of Merit and £20 in prize money.

Made by the Art Division at the college, under the supervision of

Lyn Cockle and Paul Miller, in the buildings and grounds at Tonbridge, the film involved about a dozen of the students.

Brian Partridge and Paul Travis played the leading roles as two gangsters, with the other students as slapstick policemen chasing them around in the best tradition of Mack Sennet and the Keystone Cops.

MOTORING by John Byworth



I ENJOYED my visit to the Datsun Dealer last month, and as a new model has just been introduced I went back again. This time to look at the new Cherry which is the cheapest car in the present range. The automatic version is the five-door hatchback, which has a normal automatic gearbox fitted to a 1500 cc engine driving the front wheels.

The shape of this type of car over the last few years has become very common due to the aerodynamic shape and one has to look at the name on the back to see who made it. Nevertheless, it is a good practical shape and from the point of view of the disabled driver it is good for parking, when steering with only one hand.

The Cherry gives the impression of a strong, well built, little car, not the most innovative of its type but its simplicity is deliberate to give long life and reliability. Like all Datsuns the paint finish is perfect and with large areas of matt black trim, which to my eye, makes a very attractive little car, with a slightly sporty look.

Quiet

Inside I found the fabric seats very comfortable, which coupled with the carpets and the sound proofing made it an extremely quiet car to drive, despite the front wheel drive.

The unusually shaped instrument panel contains everything any driver of this type of small car should need and there is, of course, an extremely powerful push button radio fitted as standard.

All the switches are the rocker type and positioned under the instrument panel within easy reach from the normal driving position

The heater is more than adequate for the size of car and is fitted with a recirculation system on the fan, to give an even temperature in the winter. The single spoke steering wheel gives a clear view of the instruments and is adjustable for height which many drivers may find a great advantage.

Under the bonnet there is a spacious engine compartment with a nice simple four-cylinder overhead camshaft engine driving the front wheels. All parts were easily accessible for regular maintenance and it is fitted with a no-maintenance battery which I think all cars should have.

The rear door and petrol cap open from the inside, and although the rear sill is high (quite a lift for a wheelchair) the boot area is a spacious 38in x 32in under a lightweight plastic cover, and the rear seats fold very easily to give even more space. While, in the back, I also noticed the rear doors are fitted with child safety locks to prevent them from being opened accidentally from the inside.

On the road the car is quiet, fast and easy to drive. I found that despite the front-wheel drive, the steering was still comparatively light and required very little movement from lock to lock.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Constant 56 mph gives 44.1 mpg.

Constant 75 mph gives 33.2 mpg.

Town driving cycle gives 34.0 mpg.

Overall length: 3,960.

Overall width: 1,620.

Engine: 1,488 cc overhead camshaft giving 75 bhp driving the front wheels through a three-speed automatic gearbox.

The present price is £4,609 on the road with approx £155 for basic hand controls if required.

Datsun will give a small discount for the disabled driver and arrange for the transfer of the car to and from the adaptation centre (for hand controls, etc) free of charge.

For more details please contact: Ironside Motors Ltd, Paul Bannister, 893-5 Green Lanes, Winchmore Hill N21 2QP.

New at Naidex

Continued from Page 10

tion of the balls enables even a severely disabled child to position the body with little intervention from the therapist, provides visual and tactile feedback, reduces pressure on the body and stimulates mobility.

I was glad to see that the nationalised industries were at Naidex to show that they can offer a service to the disabled.

British Telecom showed off its range of phones to help the handicapped, like the Conquest handset which incorporates a volume control in the side of the earpiece and neon lamp in the centre of the handset which flashes to indicate an incoming call.

British Gas demonstrated a range of four cooker tap handles specially designed for disabled people, including one for people with poor muscular co-ordination or tremor.

Cooking

The Electricity Council also exhibited easy to grip controls, foot controls and remote beamed controls, and drew attention to small appliances like electric kettles and sandwich toasters, slow cookers and multi cookers, which enable disabled people to prepare for themselves and their family even if they are unable to use conventional cookers.

Apart from the specialised areas such as lifts, wheelchairs and speech aids it was clear from walking around Naidex that technology is now extending into the more mundane areas of disabled life including the kitchen, the playroom, the living room and the car.

There were 140 exhibitors at the exhibition which was jointly sponsored by The Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation and Macmillan Journals.

Whether it is the effect of the 1981 International Year of Disabled People, or something else manufacturers are obviously becoming aware that the disabled are not only part of the community but are in the market place.

THE **Newton Elan**

the only truly portable powered wheelchair

The Newton Elan is the only electric wheelchair to fold upright with batteries in position. And, of course, when you do want to remove them, the side-slung batteries are much easier to lift off.

Independent suspension and two-speed gearbox give a smooth, comfortable ride, indoors or outdoors. And with fully proportional control the Elan is simple to operate and turns in tight corners. Added to that, the Newton Elan is the nicest-looking wheelchair to be seen around in!

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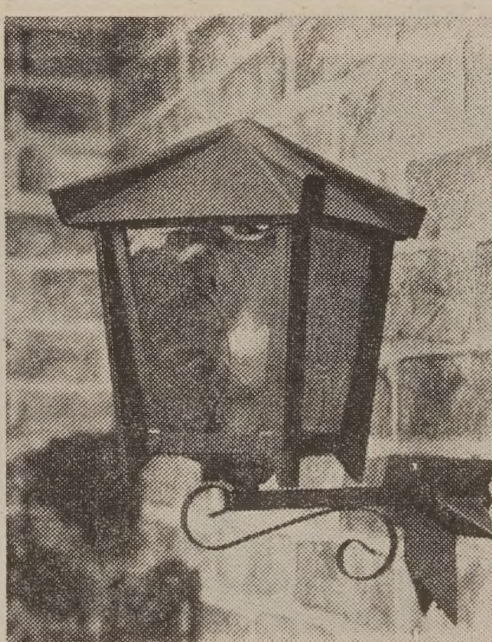


UNIQUE LAMP OFFER

An attractive outdoor lamp to enhance your porch, patio or garden. Featuring matt black two coat stoved enamel finish and white or amber glass. It is supplied complete and ready to install with bulb, screws, rawlplugs and full instructions.

Manufactured completely in Spastics Society Workshops.

Full refund if not satisfied, allow 21 days for delivery.



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incl. VAT and p&p.

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Please send me lamps at £12.95 each
with white glass ☐ with amber glass ☐

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Address

I enclose cheque/P.O. value

Date

Make cheques, P.O.'s payable to The Spastics Society.



Adam and the Society appeal for Christmas goodwill

ADAM Howard's picture is featured on the front page of *Spastics News*, and on the front page of the millions of leaflets appealing for money this Christmas. The Society's appeal "package" also includes some of the most attractive Christmas seals ever — just one strip is shown here — but unfortunately, we can't reproduce the attractive colours.

The seals are more than a "token gift" to millions of households, they also carry a message asking for help, and the deeper message of integration for spastic people in the drawings, because handicapped children are joining in with the Christmas fun depicted.

Adam's picture is also used on the advertising with the message "He needs your help this Christmas. But he can't say thank you. A headline, in fact, which has caused some discussion among students of English usage! Several callers to *Spastic News* have asked if the advert headline should not quote the words "thank you" to be correct? Perhaps it should, but does it matter, we replied, because obviously you have seen it, read it, and thought about it — which is the aim of good advertising.

Last year's Christmas appeal raised £1,454,000, this year's target is £1,717,000, so a lot depends on Adam, a boy who, explains the leaflet, is severely handicapped, cannot walk or sit unsupported, and cannot speak: "But he is charming and alert and responds with a beautiful smile when you speak to him."

The Society hopes that Adam, together with the appeal package of the Director's letter, information about the charity, the seals, new labels being tried out in test areas, donation forms with handy credit card facilities, deed of covenant information, plus a reply paid envelope, will touch the hearts of the generous in the season of goodwill.

Giving thanks for 30 years

THE church of St Martins - in - the - Fields will hold a service of thanksgiving to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the formation of The Spastics Society, on Sunday, December 5, 1982, at 2.30 pm.

The church, which occupies a famous site at the corner of Trafalgar Square watched over by Nelson, Britain's most famous disabled hero atop his column, welcomes everyone who wishes to attend the service. It will be conducted by the Reverend Austen Williams, Vicar of St Martins - in - the - Fields.

The address will be given by Mr Max Sinclair, who made a remarkable recovery after being paralysed in a car accident.

There are no special parking arrangements, but there should be little difficulty in finding a parking space in the vicinity on a Sunday afternoon.

Duchess presents her Special Service Awards to devoted supporters



Mr William Hargreaves.



Mr Alex Moira.



Mrs Catherine Adey.



Mr William Burn.

THE first Patron's Special Service Awards were presented to four long-serving supporters of the Society by the Duchess of Kent at the AGM.

Bill Hargreaves, who is about to retire from his job as Industrial Liaison Officer, was the first to be presented with the new award.

Mrs Catherine Adey, who was made an Hon Life Member at the last AGM was the next to receive the award. Mrs Adey has been in the movement of helping spastic people since 1944.

Following Mrs Adey was Mr William Burn, retiring from the Society after many years of service, including being Chairman from 1966 to 1973. Finally came Alex Moira, one of the founders of The Spastics Society, and its first Treasurer and Vice-Chairman.

In addition to his award the Duchess gave Mr Moira, who is an architect, a silver trowel as a tribute to all the work he did in building up the Society in its early days.

Just before the presentations of the awards it was announced by the Chairman, Mrs Joyce Smith, that Bill Hargreaves, Alex Moira and William Burn have been made Honorary Life Members of The Spastics Society.

How Spastics News helped Kim's West Indies cricket dream come true

CRICKET lover Kim Searle is going to realise the dream of a lifetime, thanks to the efforts of his mother and *Spastics News*, and the generosity of the people of Barbados.

Kim is 24 years old with cerebral palsy and mild epilepsy, and his main interest in life is cricket. His particular favourites are the West Indian cricketers and his dream is to see them play and meet them on their home ground in the West Indies.

Mrs Pamela Searle, his

mother, wrote to *Spastics News* about her plans to take Kim to see the Test series between England and the West Indies next year.

"However, as my husband has worked on a farm for the past 32 years we are, of course, struggling to raise the money. We are going to manage all right, but it had occurred to me it would help the financial position if we could stay (paying our own way, of course) with a family or hostel rather than hotels," she wrote.

There is no equivalent of the *Spastics Society* in the West Indies, but *Spastics News* contacted Mrs

Helen Murray - Aynsley, President of the Barbados Association for Mentally Retarded Children, who came up trumps.

She has arranged accommodation for the Searles with the Vice-President of the Association, Miss Innis, who is also a cricket lover; will provide transport for the Searles and buy admission tickets in advance.

When we told Mrs Searle of the news at her home in Capel, near Dorking, in Surrey, she said: "I am very, very grateful to Mrs Murray-Aynsley and to *Spastics News*. It is very kind of you."

Kim, who spent some time as a pupil at Inglefield Manor School and once featured on a *Spastics Society* poster, spends virtually every minute of the summer enjoying cricket, either on television, radio or watching Sussex play.

He sits up all night when the England team are abroad on tour listening to radio commentaries.

"From Friday next," says Mrs Searle, "he will be getting up at 5 am to listen to the Test Match commentaries from Australia."

Kim met the West Indies team in person when they played at Arundel against

the Duke of Norfolk's XI on the last tour of England, and his special heroes are Clive Lloyd, Viv Richards and Joel Garner.

"The West Indies are his ideal," said Mrs Searle. "He spent a lot of time in hospital when he was young and became very fond of the West Indian doctors and nurses. Ever since he has had this thing about the West Indies."

So far Kim and Mrs Searle have raised £800 towards the cost of the trip.

"All his birthday money and Christmas money has gone into saving for the West Indies," said Mrs Searle.

SPASTICS NEWS

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